

How to Share Your Testimony - Part 2 - Acts 22:4-9 – September 20th, 2009

- Paul has just been taken into a protective custody, and on his way into the Antonia Fortress, is given permission to speak to the mob.
- Instead of just preaching the gospel, the beloved Apostle weaves the gospel into the fabric of his testimony in how he came to Christ.
- Paul knows his most powerful defense is his testimony. They can argue with his theology and his typology, but not with his testimony.

- This is part two of a series titled; "How to Share Your Testimony." In this study, we will learn very important ways in which to do this.

1. Be prepared (Verse 1)

- The way Paul begins seems to indicate that he had not only anticipated this opportunity, but had actually been well prepared for it.

2. Speak their language (Verse 2)

- Paul could have spoken Greek but chooses to speak in the Hebrew tongue, knowing they would understand the language of their heart.

3. Find common ground (Verse 3a)

- Paul says he's a Jew born in Tarsus but brought up in Jerusalem so he would have common ground with the Greek and Hellenist Jews.

4. Earn their respect (Verses 3b-5)

3b ...Under Gamaliel I was thoroughly trained in the law of our fathers and was just as zealous for God as any of you are today. 4 I persecuted the followers of this Way to their death, arresting both men and women and throwing them into prison, 5 as also the high priest and all the Council can testify. I even obtained letters from them to their brothers in Damascus, and went there to bring these people as prisoners to Jerusalem to be punished.

- v3b Paul tells how he was trained by Gamaliel, one of the most respected rabbis in Hebrew history, and he was as zealous as they are.
- v4 In fact he was so zealous that he used to persecute, imprison, and even kill those who were followers of the Way as Christians.
- v5 He says that the high priest and Council could testify how he took letters to Damascus to bring Christians to Jerusalem to stand trial.

- For Paul to tell them this is absolutely brilliant. By doing this, he's disarming their hostilities and earning their respect at the same time.
- He allies himself to both of the Jewish factions in the crowd by cleverly associating himself with Gamaliel, who was a disciple of Hillel.
- In so doing, he was earning their respect as a man schooled in the law, the rabbinic interpretation of the law, and his zeal for the law.

"He showed that he had once been as furious against the Christians as they themselves now were; this was intended to win their attention, [earn their respect], for the rest of his defense."

Charles Spurgeon

5. Turn on the light (Verses 6-9)

6 "About noon as I came near Damascus, suddenly a bright light from heaven flashed around me. 7 I fell to the ground and heard a voice say to me, 'Saul! Saul! Why do you persecute me?' 8 "'Who are you, Lord?' I asked. "'I am Jesus of Nazareth, whom you are persecuting,' he replied. 9 My companions saw the light, but they did not understand the voice of him who was speaking to me.

- v6 Paul then tells them that at noon, the brightest part of the day, a bright light from heaven flashed around him. He had seen the light.
- v7 After seeing this bright heavenly light, he then falls to the ground and hears a voice saying; "Saul! Saul! Why do you persecute me?"
- v8-9 Saul says; "Who are you, Lord?" then hears, "I am Jesus of Nazareth whom you persecute, but his companions didn't understand.

- Why is Paul telling them all of this in this way? I believe it is because he wanted to turn on the light instead of cursing the darkness.
- He could've easily gone from talking about how zealous he was for the law, to pointing out how wrong they were to trust in only the law.
- He chooses to tell them what Jesus, the light of the world, could do in them, instead of what the law, by itself, could not do for them.